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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/758,112	01/03/2001	Toufic Boubez	RSW920000102US1	7400
25259	7590	07/12/2010		
IBM CORPORATION 3039 CORNWALLIS RD. DEPT. T81 / B503, PO BOX 12195 RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27709			EXAMINER HAMILTON, LALITA M	
			ART UNIT 3691	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 07/12/2010	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

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1 UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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4 BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS  
5 AND INTERFERENCES  
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7  
8 *Ex parte* TOUFIC BOUBEZ, STEPHEN L. BURBECK, JAMES B.  
9 CASLER, STEPHEN G. GRAHAM, and MARYANN HONDO

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12 Appeal 2009-006740  
13 Application 09/758,112  
14 Technology Center 3600  
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17  
18 *Before* MURRIEL E. CRAWFORD, ANTON W. FETTING, and  
19 BIBHU R. MOHANTY, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

20  
21 CRAWFORD, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

22  
23  
24 DECISION ON APPEAL

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Appellants appeal under 35 U.S.C. § 134 (2002) from a Final Rejection of claims 1-31. We have jurisdiction under 35 U.S.C. § 6(b) (2002).

Appellants invented online systems and methods for categorizing services using canonical service descriptions (Spec. 1:21-22).

Independent claim 1 under appeal reads as follows:

1. A method, in a data processing system, of registering services in a taxonomy, comprising:  
receiving a registration request at the data processing system, the registration request including a service description and an identification of a category within the taxonomy in which the service is to be registered;  
determining if the service description should be registered in the identified category based on a canonical service description associated with the category; and  
registering the service description in the identified category using the data processing system if the determination is that the service description should be registered in the identified category.<sup>1</sup>

The prior art relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the claims on appeal is:

Poon

US 2002/0062265 A1

May 23, 2002

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<sup>1</sup> The claims set forth in the Claims Appendix of the Replacement Appeal Brief filed July 13, 2007 do not appear to include the changes made to the claims in the Amendment filed March 28, 2005. As that Amendment was entered and considered by the Examiner in the Office Action mailed June 28, 2005, we refer to those claims set forth in the Amendment in deciding this appeal.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Poon.

## ISSUES

Did the Examiner err in asserting that the subject matter of independent claims 11 and 21 is anticipated by Poon?

Did the Examiner err in asserting that the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 31 is anticipated by Poon?

Did the Examiner err in asserting that the subject matter of dependent claims 2-10 is anticipated by Poon?

## FINDINGS OF FACT

*Poon*

The client browser 336 within the client application 332 receives category hierarchy data from the server application 312 at step 405. The category hierarchy data includes category and subcategory information. Using the category data, the client browser 336 performs the category selection process as follows. Once the user is ready to select an item category, at step 410, a decision is made whether a category number is available to the user. If the user has previously selected the same category and subcategories and has stored the category number associated with the category and the respective subcategories, the user enters the category number at step 420. As a result, based on the category number, the respective category and related subcategories are selected and displayed by the client browser 336 in the respective fields ([0028]).

If the category number or numeric I.D. is not available, then, at step 430, the user selects a category from a list of available categories displayed in an interactive category area. Next, the client browser 336 performs a test whether the selected category has related subcategories at step 440. If the selected category has no related subcategories, then the user has the option to record the category number of the selected category at step 445 and may proceed further with the item registration process ([0029]).

## ANALYSIS

### Independent Claims 11 and 21

We are persuaded that the Examiner erred in asserting that Poon anticipates the subject matter of independent claims 11 and 21 (App. Br. 12-14). Poon discloses that the user performs the recited determining step by navigating various categories and subcategories prior to selecting the one most appropriate for the good/service they wish to register. Once the user has selected an appropriate category/subcategory, the user submits the registration request with a description of the good/service and the category/subcategory ([0028]-[0029]).

Independent claim 11 recites first, second, and third instructions of a computer program product on a computer readable medium as performing the aforementioned steps. Poon does not recite any such instructions, computer program product, or computer readable medium for performing at least the second instruction which includes the determining step, as the user in Poon performs this step.

Independent claim 21 recites means for performing the receiving, determining, and registering steps. Page 7 of the Appeal Brief recites a

1 combination of broker 420, device 104, data processing system 200,  
2 processors 202, 204, and memory 209 as means for performing the  
3 aforementioned steps. Poon recites that the user performs at least the  
4 determining step.

5 Accordingly, as this is a rejection under § 102(e), we will not sustain  
6 this rejection.

7  
8 *Independent Claims 1 and 31*

9 We are not persuaded that the Examiner erred in asserting that Poon  
10 anticipates the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 31 (App. Br. 12-  
11 14). Unlike independent claims 11 and 21, independent claims 1 and 31 are  
12 method claims. Accordingly, Poon's disclosure of the user performing the  
13 "determining" step is sufficient to anticipate the recited aspects.

14 Moreover, Poon discloses that once the number of possible  
15 subcategories has been exhausted, the user has the option to record the  
16 category number of the selected category for the particular auction item with  
17 web server 310 at step 445 ([0029]). This corresponds to the "receiving"  
18 and "registering" steps recited in independent claims 1 and 31.

19  
20 *Dependent Claims 2-10*

21 We are persuaded that the Examiner erred in asserting that Poon  
22 anticipates the subject matter of some of dependent claims 2-10 (App. Br.  
23 12-14). For claim 2, Poon discloses a "canonical service description  
24 identif[ying] minimum criteria for the category," as Poon's category, at a  
25 minimum, includes a title which corresponds to "minimum criteria." *See In*  
26 *re Am. Acad. of Sci. Tech. Ctr.*, 367 F.3d 1359, 1364 (Fed. Cir. 2004)

1 (during examination of a patent application, a pending claim is given the  
2 broadest reasonable construction consistent with the specification and should  
3 be read in light of the specification as it would be interpreted by one of  
4 ordinary skill in the art).

5 For claim 3, Poon's recitation of the particular auction item in web  
6 server 310 with a selected category corresponds to the recited "storing the  
7 service description and an associated model description in a storage in  
8 association with the category."

9 For claims 5 and 6, we agree with Appellants. Poon does not disclose  
10 requesting to add a new category. All queries to server application 312  
11 merely bring up existing categories.

12 For claim 7, we agree with Appellants that Poon does not disclose  
13 security requirements, privacy requirements, and communications protocol  
14 requirements. However, because such requirements are nothing more than  
15 printed matter, we use our authority under 37 C.F.R. § 41.50(b) (2009), and  
16 enter a new ground of rejection for this claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as  
17 being obvious over Poon. *See In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385-86 (Fed  
18 Cir. 1983) (where the printed matter is not functionally related to the  
19 substrate, the printed matter will not distinguish the invention from the prior  
20 art in terms of patentability).

21 For claim 8, the user in Poon performs the recited steps of searching  
22 for and registering the auction item under alternate categories.

23 For claims 4, 9, and 10, Appellants only argue that they depend from  
24 allowable independent claim 1. Accordingly, we sustain the rejections of  
25 those claims.

26

DECISION

The decision of the Examiner to reject claims 1-4, 8-10, and 31 is affirmed.

The decision of the Examiner to reject claims 5, 6, and 11-30 is reversed.

Using our authority under 37 C.F.R. § 41.50(b), we newly reject claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Poon.

This decision contains a new ground of rejection pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.50(b) (effective September 13, 2004, 69 Fed. Reg. 49960 (August 12, 2004), 1286 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 21 (September 7, 2004)). 37 C.F.R. § 41.50(b) provides “[a] new ground of rejection pursuant to this paragraph shall not be considered final for judicial review.”

37 C.F.R. § 41.50(b) also provides that the appellants, WITHIN TWO MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THE DECISION, must exercise one of the following two options with respect to the new ground of rejection to avoid termination of the appeal as to the rejected claims:

(1) *Reopen prosecution*. Submit an appropriate amendment of the claims so rejected or new evidence relating to the claims so rejected, or both, and have the matter reconsidered by the examiner, in which event the proceeding will be remanded to the examiner . . . .

(2) *Request rehearing*. Request that the proceeding be reheard under § 41.52 by the Board upon the same record . . . .



1       No time period for taking any subsequent action in connection with  
2 this appeal may be extended under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). *See* 37 C.F.R.  
3 § 1.136(a)(1)(iv) (2007).

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5                   AFFIRMED-IN-PART; 37 C.F.R. § 41.50(b)

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